

Message Text

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FOL RPT USNATO 2415 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DTD 08 MAR 78

QUOTE: S E C R E T USNATO 02415

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PARM, MNUC

SUBJECT: NATO CONSULTATIONS ON ERW

1. DUTCH CHARGE BUWALDA TOLD US DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER
HAD ACCEPTED PROPOSAL TO HOLD NATO CONSULTATIONS ON ERW
ON MARCH 20. HOWEVER, DUTCH WOULD STRONGLY PREFER SECOND
AND FINAL MEETING ON THE 23RD RATHER THAN 22ND. BUWALDA
CONFIRMED THAT DUTCH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WAS UNLIKELY
TO CHANGE FROM THAT STATED BY PRIME MINISTER VAN AGT AS
REPORTED MARCH 8 BY REUTERS, I.E., THAT THE DUTCH WOULD

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 060439

RESIST ANY AMERICAN PRESSURE FOR A PRIOR COMMITMENT ON
DEPLOYING THE ERW IN ADVANCE OF EAST-WEST ARMS CONTROL
TALKS ON THE ERW AND HAD SO PROMISED THE NETHERLANDS
PARLIAMENT.

2. BUWALDA (AS WELL AS NORWEGIAN AMBASSADOR VIBE AND
GERMAN DCM BOSS) URGED US TO CIRCULATE DRAFT "ALLIED

STATEMENT" SUGGESTED IN POINT 3 OF US PROPOSAL, WELL BEFORE THE MARCH 20 MEETING, IN ORDER TO HELP EXPEDITE ALLIED CONSIDERATION . (STATEMENT COULD BE IN FORM OF SUMMING UP BY LUNS OF MARCH 22 OR 23 MEETING.) UK REP KILLICK REPEATED HIS EARLIER COMMENT THAT HE ANTICIPATED LONDON WOULD HAVE PROBLEMS WITH LINKAGE TO SS-20.

3. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, BOSS SAID GERMANS WERE INCREASINGLY SKEPTICAL THAT BELGIANS WOULD BE ABLE TO GO MUCH BEYOND POSITION OUTLINED BY VAN AGT. HE DID NOT SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT GERMANS WERE BACKING OFF FROM THEIR OWN SUPPORT FOR US PROPOSAL DESPITE LIKELY DUTCH AND BELGIAN POSITIONS.

4. AMBASSADOR APPROACHED SYG LUNS TO INQUIRE HOW SYG EVALUATED DUTCH POSITION ON ERW AS RESULT OF HIS VISIT TO THE HAGUE FROM WHICH HE RETURNED MARCH 7. LUNS SAID HE HAD EITHER MET OR DINED WITH LEADING MEMBERS OF NEW DUTCH GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER, FINANCE MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEFENSE AUTHORITIES. HE CONFIRMED EMBASSY THE HAGUE'S TELEGRAM 1173 TO EFFECT DEFENSE MINISTER'S RESIGNATION WAS FOR BROADER REASONS THAN THE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED GROUND OF HIS DIFFICULTIES WITH ERW. LUNS REGRETTED HE NOW SAW NO RPT NO POSSIBILITY
SECRET

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PAGE 03 STATE 060439

OF FAVORABLE DUTCH ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR POSITION ON ERW. LUNS TOOK POSITION THAT SOVIET PROPAGANDA ON ERW HAD SO AFFECTED CHURCH COMMUNITIES OF NETHERLANDS AND, THROUGH THEM, POLITICAL PARTIES, THAT DUTCH WERE NOW LOCKED INTO ANTI-ERW POSITION. HE COMMENTED THAT SOCIALISTS HAD NOT SUPPORTED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MOTION OPPOSING ERW FOR SIMPLE REASON IT DID NOT GO FAR ENOUGH FOR THEM.

5. LUNS SUGGESTED TONE OF OUR PUBLIC STATEMENT SHOULD BE THAT DECISION ON PRODUCTION ERW HAD ALWAYS BEEN OF COURSE ONE FOR US ALONE. HOWEVER, WE HAD BEEN INTERESTED TO HAVE VIEWS OF OUR ALLIES AND HAD CONSULTED WITH THEM TO THAT END AND NOW WE WERE GOING AHEAD. A UNANIMOUS DECISION WAS NOT REQUIRED AND HAD NEVER BEEN ANTICIPATED. THEN, LUNS SEEMED TO SUGGEST, ALLIES COULD MAKE SUPPORTING STATEMENTS, AND HE WOULD HOPE THAT DUTCH WOULD AT LEAST REMAIN SILENT RATHER THAN EXPRESS OPPOSITION PUBLICLY.

6. COMMENT: DUTCH POSITION, WHILE NOT TOTALLY UNEXPECTED AT USNATO, HAS COMPLICATED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ALLIED STATEMENT. INDEED, BUWALDA SAID HE BELIEVED DUTCH WOULD INSIST ON LANGUAGE NOTING THEIR POSITION. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE

USEFUL FOR US TO CIRCULATE A DRAFT STATEMENT BEFORE THE
MARCH 20 MEETING IN ORDER TO FOCUS DISCUSSION AND HELP
ENSURE THAT MARCH 23 MEETING IS BOTH FINAL AND
AS SUCCESSFUL AS POSSIBLE. END COMMENT.

7. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECDEF, ALL NATO CAPITALS AND
USNMR SHAPE FOR GENERAL HAIG. BENNETT UNQUOTE VANCE

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